

# **Washington State Ferries Operational Update**

## **Senate Transportation Committee**

Patty Rubstello, Assistant Secretary of  
Washington State Ferries

December 1, 2022

Roger Millar, Secretary of Transportation

Amy Scarton, Deputy Secretary of Transportation










A map of the Puget Sound region in Washington state, showing a network of roads and a highlighted red line connecting various locations. The red line starts at Sidney, goes to Orcas, Shaw, Lopez, Anacortes, Friday Harbor, Port Townsend, Coupeville, Clinton, Mukilteo, Kingston, Edmonds, Seattle, Bainbridge Island, Bremerton, Southworth, Vashon, Tahlequah, Pt. Defiance, and Tacoma. The map also shows major highways (1, 17, 5, 20, 101, 104, 3, 16, 90, 2), cities (Victoria, Bellingham, Mt. Vernon, Everett, Port Angeles, Shelton, Tacoma), and geographical features (Hood Canal Bridge, Fauntleroy). A north arrow is present.

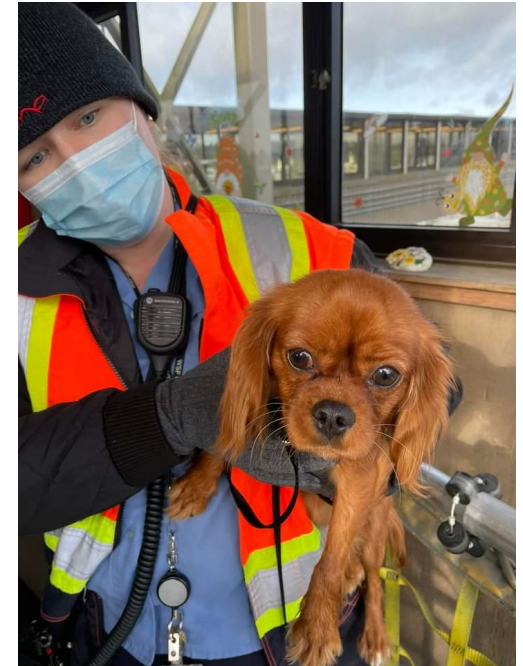


# State's marine highway since 1951

# BY THE NUMBERS

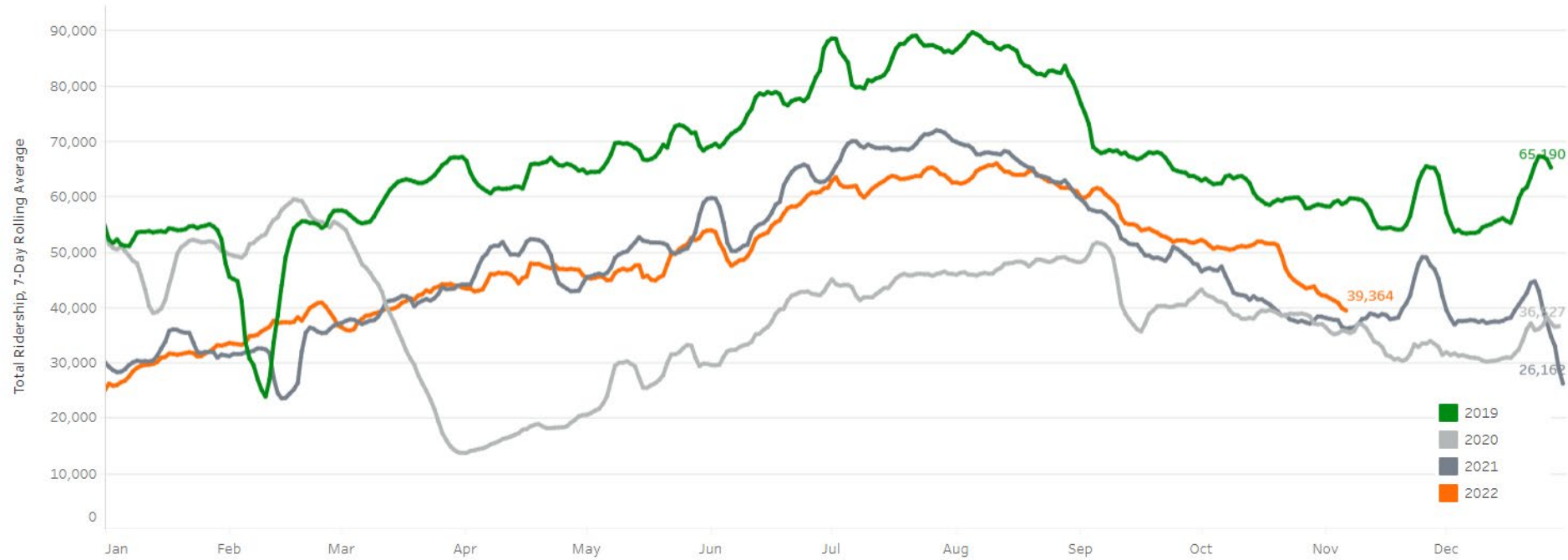
Highlights and accomplishments from Jan. 1 – Oct. 31, 2022

-  14,865,961 total riders
-  7,299,049 drivers (with vehicle)
-  7,566,912 vehicle passengers and walk-ons
-  120,414 trips completed
-  650,786 service miles
-  98.1% trip reliability
-  26 Lifesaving events
-  2,150 medical priority loads
-  267 Whale sightings reported



# RIDERSHIP

- Total 2022 ridership compared to previous years (data updated as of 11/6/22)



# 2022 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET – WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Capital Program:
  - Provided \$4 million in 2021-23 for a new dispatch system (\$14 million total)
- Operating Program:
  - \$8.5 million for efforts to support recruitment and retention
    - \$100k for targeted **continuous hiring**
    - \$200k for **external recruitment** with an emphasis on attracting underrepresented communities
    - \$7.5 million to enhance employee retention by standardizing **on-call worker schedules**
    - \$413k to increase **training and development** opportunities for employees
    - \$200k to make **improvements to hiring** process by establishing additional HR positions
  - \$294k for deck and engine **internships**
  - \$93,000 ongoing for WSF to secure housing for trainees and to pay for the costs of federally required credentials
  - \$2.5 million for **training of new hires** and familiarization for new assignments
- Funds from the Move Ahead Washington package will replace federal funds for the recruitment and retention ongoing efforts after the 2021-23 biennium.



# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

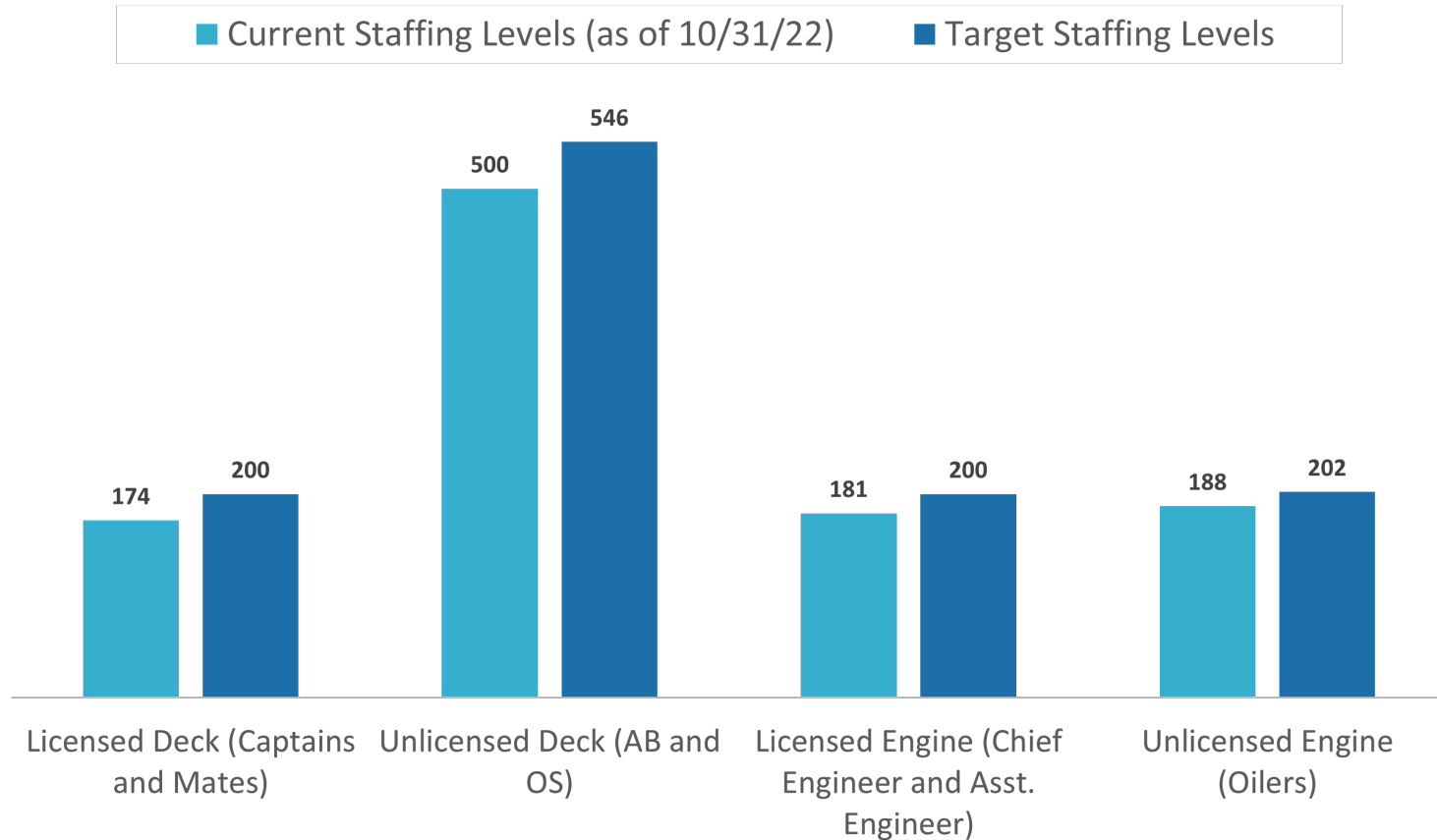
## *BECOMING AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE*

- Full time, year-round work for employees that want it
- Switched to targeted continuous hiring instead of seasonal only
- Provide funds for employees to get necessary credentials
- Developed two new training programs to help current deck employees get necessary training to become captains and mates
  - AB to Mate Credentialing Program
  - AB to Mate Pilotage Program
- New Mate Orientation will start early next year to help address our shortage of licensed deck officers.
- Created a mentorship program for new employees
- Implemented Wiper Program – Entry level position for engine room
- Oiler to Assistant Engineer – Test Prep Course



# TARGET STAFFING LEVELS

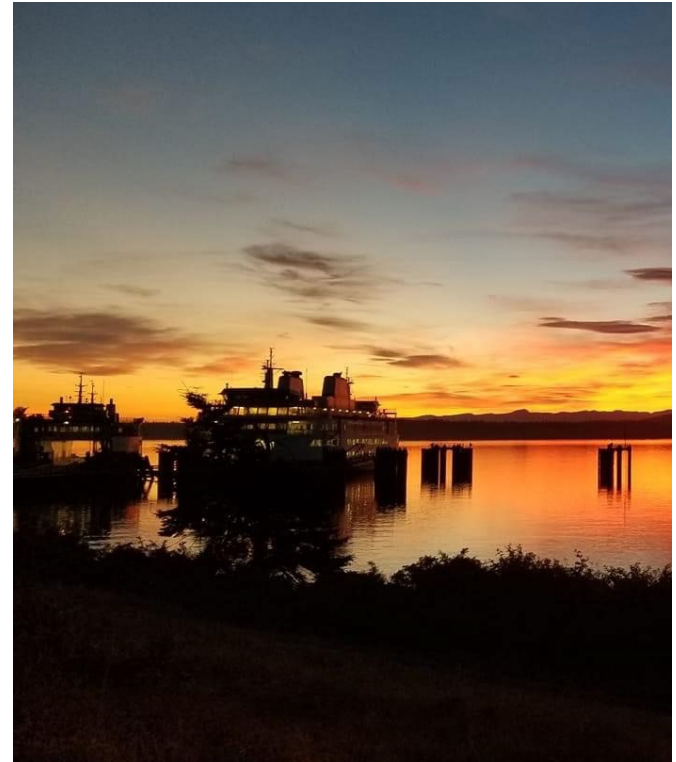
## Washington State Ferries: Staffing Needs



# SERVICE RESTORATION

## Return to pre-pandemic service dependent on:

- ✓ The trajectory of the pandemic and ongoing impacts of COVID-19 on the workforce.
- ✓ Ridership levels and accommodating the seasonal increase in summer peak season ridership.
- ✓ The ability of WSF to recruit, hire and train new employees to fill key positions.
- ✓ The rate of retirements and other separations that contribute to overall staffing levels.
- ✓ Lack of vessels due to unanticipated breakdowns and an aging fleet.



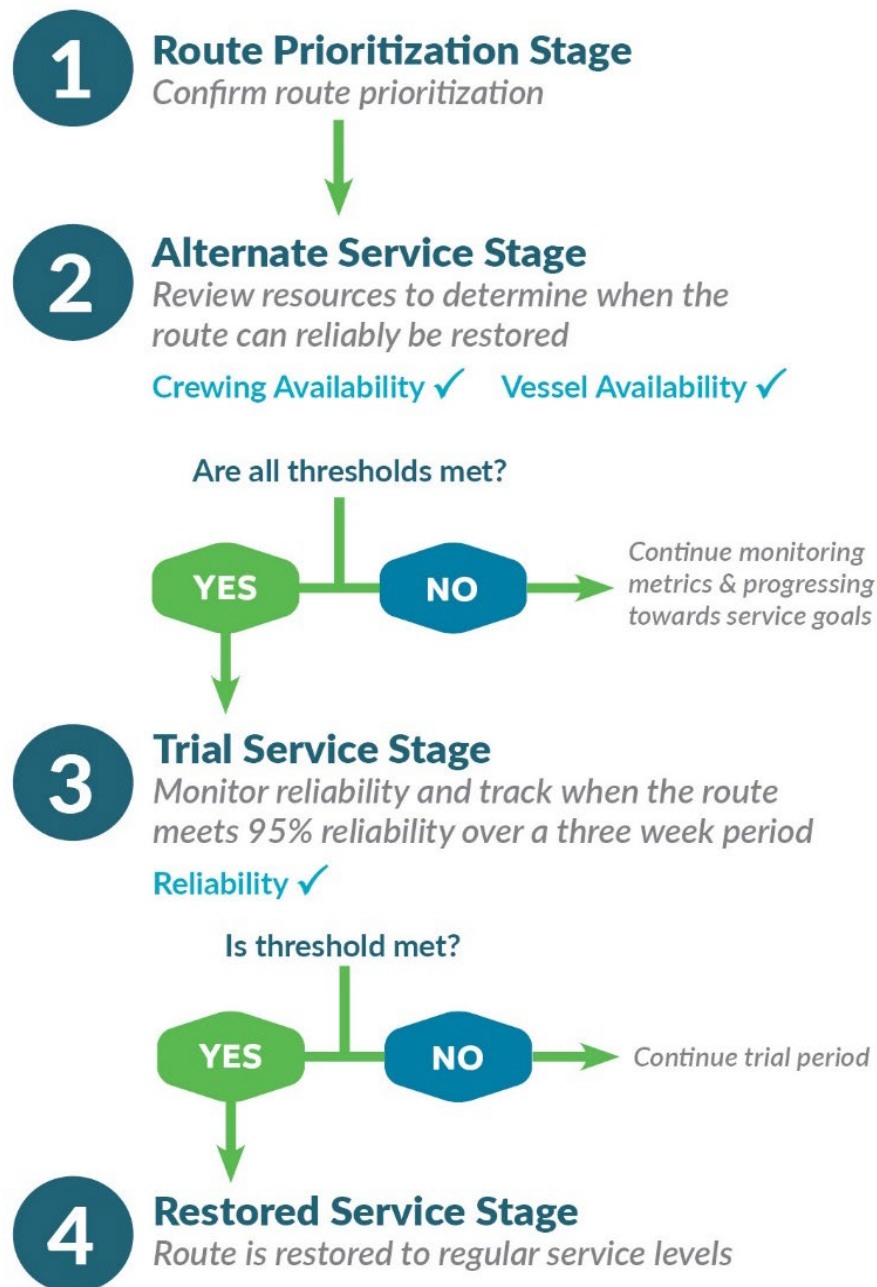


# SERVICE RESTORATION PROCESS

## Route prioritization

- Anacortes/San Juan Islands
- Seattle/Bainbridge
- Mukilteo/Clinton
- Edmonds/Kingston
- Fauntleroy/Vashon Island/Southworth
- Seattle/Bremerton
- Port Townsend/Coupeville
- Anacortes/Sidney BC

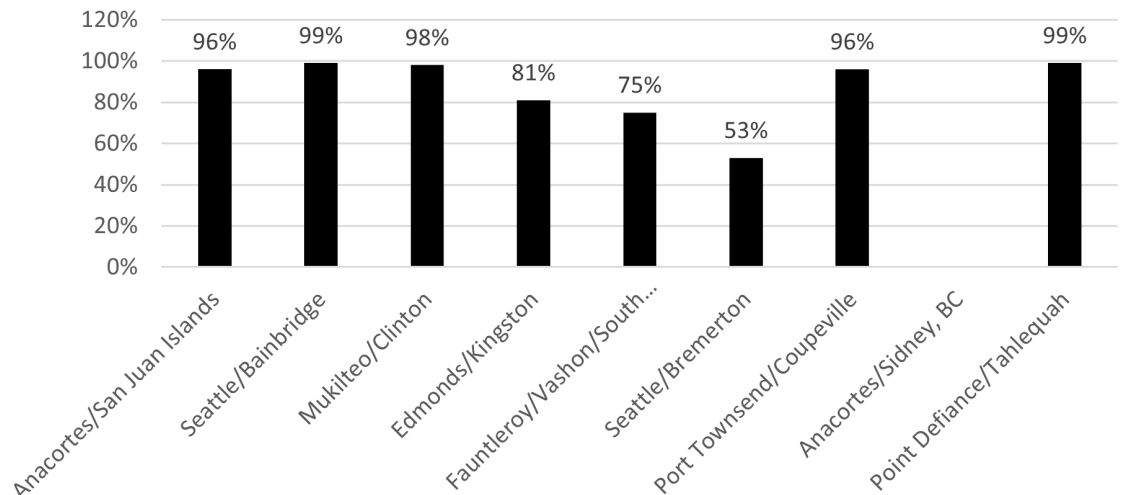
\* Point Defiance/Tahlequah remains on one-boat service



# SERVICE RESTORATION PROGRESS

Route	Restoration Stage
ANACORTES/ SAN JUAN ISLANDS	4 Regular Service
SEATTLE/ BAINBRIDGE	4 Regular Service
MUKILTEO/CLINTON	4 Regular Service
EDMONDS/KINGSTON	2 Alternate Service
FAUNTLEROY/ VASHON/ SOUTHWORTH	2 Alternate Service
SEATTLE/ BREMERTON	2 Alternate Service
PORT TOWNSEND/ COUPEVILLE	Late-Fall/Winter Regular Service Late-Spring Alternate Service
ANACORTES/ SIDNEY, B.C.	No Service
POINT DEFIANCE/ TAHLEQUAH	Regular Service

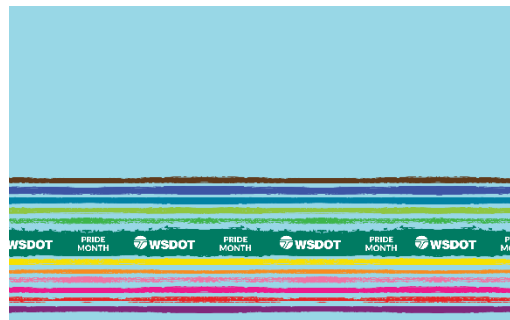
Service Reliability for Oct. 31-Nov. 13, 2022



*This chart illustrates current reliability for all routes based on a regular, pre-pandemic schedule.*

# WSF DIVERSITY ADVISORY GROUP (DAG)

- WSF has a Diversity Advisory Group that meets monthly with over 20 active members representing employees working on our vessels, at our Eagle Harbor maintenance facility, and at the WSF headquarters office
- Some of the initiatives the DAG has undertaken are:
  - Created a Passenger Code of Conduct to help protect our employees, especially those at the terminals and on the vessels, from harassment
  - Reviewed the position titles and terminology used at WSF to make sure the language we use is more inclusive
  - Taken the lead to create Teams backgrounds that can be used by all WSDOT employees

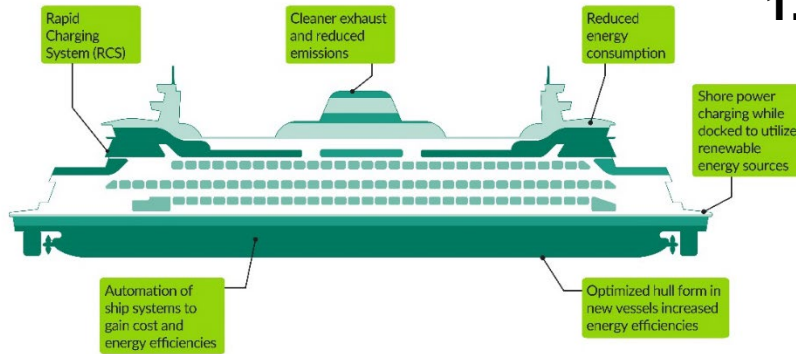


# ELECTRIFICATION & NEW VESSELS

WSF has \$1.33 billion, from the **Move Ahead Washington Package**, in funding for three key elements of the electrification program –

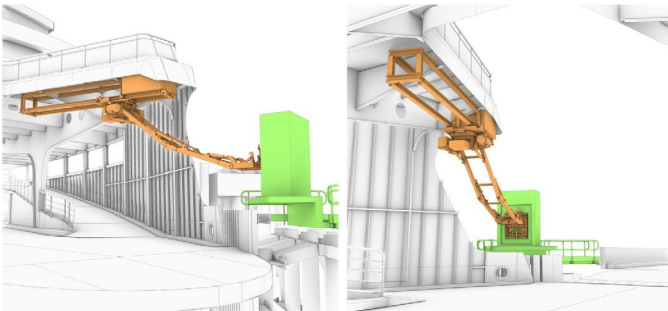
## 1. Building new vessels

- Funding for 5 new hybrid-electric Olympic Class (HEOC) ferries
- Construction of the first HEOC ferry is anticipated to begin in 2023 and it's expected to enter service on the Mukilteo/Canton route in mid-2027



## 2. Converting Jumbo Mark II vessels

- *Wenatchee* scheduled to start its hybrid conversion in fall 2023 and will re-enter service on the Seattle/Bainbridge route in early 2024



## 3. Terminal electrification

- Construction to bring power to Central Sound terminals anticipated to start in 2025 and wrap up in 2027.



# TERMINAL IMPROVEMENTS



*Replacing the old Bainbridge Overhead Walkway – **construction began this summer***



*Seattle Ferry Terminal at Colman Dock – **on track to be complete in 2023***  
*Main terminal building opened week of November 14, 2022*



*Fauntleroy Ferry Terminal – **in the planning phase to replace the current terminal***

# Questions?

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